music at convocation hall

Marnie Giesbrecht, organist
and
The University of Alberta
Madrigal Singers
Leonard Ratzlaff, conductor

Guest: Arthur Crighton
Host: Myer Horowitz

Saturday, November 11, 1995
7:00 pm *Pre-Concert*
Introduction
and Reception
8:00 pm *Concert*

Convocation Hall, Arts Building
University of Alberta

Program

Processional

Andrew Grant, bagpipes

O Canada

Gloria (1962) — Harry Somers (b. 1925)

Tom Macleay, tenor
Russell Whitehead and Fordyce Pier, trumpets

How They So Softly Rest (1917) — Healey Willan (1880-1968)

Three Preludes:
Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein, BWV 641 (1714) — Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Wellspring of All Blessings (1987) — Gerhard Krapf (b. 1924)
The Strife is O'er (1993) — Derek Holman (b. 1931)

Lass dich nur nichts nicht dauren, Op. 30 (1856) — Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Prelude and Fugue in E-flat Major, BWV 552 (1739) — Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Intermission

Te Deum in C Major (1934) — Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Jolaine Kerley, soprano

Sonata in D Major, KV 123 (1772) — Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Arranged for organ duet

Allegro - Andante - Allegro molto

Joachim Segger, organist

Symphony VI, Op. 59 (1930) — Louis Vierne (1879-1937)

Final

Psalm 90 (1924) — Charles Ives (1874-1954)

Melanie Cherniwchan, soprano
Tom Macleay, tenor
Nicole Arendt, Lisa Bebyck, Ross Mellors, and Tammy Morrison, percussion

O Canada

O Canada! Our home and native land!
True patriot love in all thy sons command.
With glowing hearts we see thee rise,
The True North strong and free;
From far and wide, O Canada,
We stand on guard for thee.
God keep our land glorious and free!
O Canada! We stand on guard for thee.
O Canada! We stand on guard for thee.

O Canada! Terre de nos aïeux,
Ton front est ceint de fleurons glorieux!
Car ton bras sait porter l'épée,
Il sait porter la croix!
Ton histoire est une épopée
Des plus brillants exploits.
Et ta valeur, de foi trempée,
Protégera nos foyers et nos droits,
Protégera nos foyers et nos droits.

Gloria
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will. We praise thee; we bless thee; we adore thee; we glorify thee. We give thee thanks for thy great glory.

How they so softly rest
How they so softly rest,
All, all the holy dead,
Unto whose dwelling place
Now doth my soul draw near!

How they so softly rest!
All in their silent graves,
Deep to corruption
slowly down sinking!

And they no longer weep,
Here, where complaint is still!
And they no longer feel,
Here, where all gladness flies!

And by the cypresses
Softly o'ershadowed,
Until the Angel calls them,
How they so softly rest.

Lass dich nur nicht nichts dauren
Let nothing afflict thee with grief,
trouble not, as God ordains,
and so rejoice, my will!

Wherefore dost thou take care for the morrow?
He presides over all things
Who giveth thee that which is thine.

Be in all thy doings constant, steadfast;
whatsoever God wills, is, and doth betoken the best.
Amen.

Te Deum
We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.
All the earth doth worship thee, the Father everlasting.
To thee all angels cry aloud, the heavens and all the powers therein.
To thee cherubin and seraphin continually do cry:
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth;
Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of thy glory.

The glorious company of the apostles praise thee.
The goodly fellowship of the prophets praise thee.
The noble army of martyrs praise thee.
The holy church throughout all the world doth acknowledge thee;
The Father of an infinite majesty;
Thine honourable, true and only Son;
Also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.

Thou art the King of glory, O Christ.
Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.
When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man,
Thou did'st not abhor the Virgin's womb.
When thou had'st overcome the sharpness of death,
Thou did'st open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.
Thou sittest at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father.
We believe that thou shalt come to be our Judge.
We therefore pray thee, help thy servants,
whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood.

Te Deum (continued)
Make them to be numbered with thy saints,
In glory everlasting.

O Lord, save thy people, and bless thine heritage.
Govern them and lift them up forever.
Day by day we magnify thee, and we worship thy name,
ever world without end.
Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.
O Lord, have mercy upon us.
Let thy mercy lighten upon us, as our trust is in thee.
O Lord, in thee have I trusted.
Let me never be confounded.

Psalm 90
Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place from one generation to another.
Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou had'st formed the earth and the world,
even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.
Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, "Return, ye children of men."
For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.
Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep; in the morning they are like grass which groweth up.
In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth.
For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled.
Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.
For all our days are passed away in thy wrath; we spend our years as a tale that is told.

Psalm 90 (continued)
The days of our years are three score years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be four score years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.
Who knoweth the power of thine anger? Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.
So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.
Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants.
O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.
Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil.
Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.
And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.
Amen.

Program Notes

"A spark ignited and I became obsessed with music." The young Harry Somers is quoted as saying this upon meeting a doctor and his wife in 1938 who were both accomplished pianists and who took delight in introducing Somers to classical music. He commenced his studies in piano, later moving to guitar and composition. He also became concerned with the teaching and performance of Canadian music in the school system.

The **Gloria** was commissioned in the early 1960's by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. It is a striking and exhilarating setting of the familiar text, with massive chords and brilliant trumpet flourishes suggesting the exaltation of the angels as they hail the birth of the Christ Child. The contrasting middle section, "Et in terra pax" is derived from plainsong, with a Cantor alternating with the choir, and the majestic finale consists again of the opening text in grandiose style.

"How they so softly rest, all the holy dead, unto whose dwelling place now doth my soul draw near." Longfellow's text is beautifully reminiscent of what November 11 represents to Canadians. Willan, an English-born Canadian composer-organist, has set this text as a 4 to 8 voice unaccompanied chorale. Text painting was of central importance: "All in their silent graves, deep to corruption, slowly down sinking" descends to a low, almost morbid sounding unison pitch. Then, "The Angel Calls them" and we rise into a new and brighter key, returning to the original softer tonality with the statement of "How they so softly rest."

Organ preludes were commonly performed in Convocation Hall in groups of three. The choices made here are in keeping with the idea of Remembrance Day as well as celebration of the glorious Memorial Organ.

"To God on High all honour due. To teach another skills anew." This inscription was on the title of Bach's "Orgel-Büchlein" in which "Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein" is found. "The Little Organ Book" has for years been regarded as the basic instruction manual for the organist, yet it is for many regarded as the climax of Bach's writing for organ. Bach concentrated on enlivening the short chorale melodies with fresh figural patterns, counterpoint and different harmonies, creating 45 concise yet complicated chorale arrangements. This particular arrangement was chosen for its text, "When in the hour of utmost need."

In 1977, Gerhard Krapf was appointed Chairman of the Division of Keyboard Studies at the University of Alberta. He is an organist-composer, who wrote a great number of organ pieces and sacred choral works. "Wellspring of All Blessings" is also a fitting choice for Remembrance Day, and calls to mind the significant contribution that its composer has made to this institution.

"The strife is o'er, the battle done, the victory of life is won; the song of triumph has begun. Alleluia." Holman, an English-born Canadian, composes in an elusively tonal and strongly rhythmic style appropriate to this powerful text.

Program Notes (continued)

Geistliches Lied, a short contrapuntal piece for choir and organ, is an example of Brahms's preoccupation with canonic forms in his early choral writing. The text, "Let nothing ever grieve thee," is exquisitely set with 2 voice canons written at the interval of the ninth, which move to closure on the text "my soul, be still." The text, by Paul Flemming (1609-1640), offers the reassurance that God's mercy and grace will still the sorrow of those in mourning. A canonic and modulatory "Amen" brings the work to a close with a wonderful sense of peace.

The **Prelude and Fugue in E Flat Major** is likely the richest work of its kind in Bach's *ouevre*. The ostentatious entry of the prelude consists of a blend of toccata, French overture, and concerto styles, and arranges three varying themes over eight sections. The fugue is built in the manner of rhythmic intensification in accordance with the old style of organ *canzone*. There are three sections, one in common time, the second in 6/4, and the last in 12/8. In the second and third section, a new theme is introduced to be counterpointed with the first. Stretto and inversion techniques intensify the movement to its conclusion.

This fugue, known as the *St. Anne* Fugue, was a particular favourite in past years at Convocation Hall. The name St. Anne alludes to the fugue subject which resembles William Croft's hymn, "Oh God our help in ages past," which is again appropriate for the theme of Remembrance and Celebration.

Voices in chorus have been the foundation of British musical life, and Britten was responsive all his life to requests for choral works. The **Te Deum in C Major** was commissioned by St. Mark's Church in London, and its straightforward setting is likely in regard to the capability of the choir he wrote for. As with all of his choral music, Britten uses simple ideas in imaginative and often dramatic ways to unify a work with many textual strands into a satisfying whole.

In celebration of the first organ, Dr Giesbrecht has elected to perform a transcription of the Mozart keyboard duet sonata with her husband, Joachim Segger. Transcriptions were performed quite frequently in Convocation Hall, and so it is fitting to include one on tonight's program. This sonata was written by Mozart in Salzburg in 1772, between trips to Italy. The Sonata in D Major consists of 3 movements in traditional sonata style. The first, "Allegro" is a quick common-time movement in D major, the second, "Andante" is a moderate 3/4 trio piece in the subdominant key, and the third returns to D major, and is a 2/4 "Allegro molto."

Vierne was a leader in the French school of organ composition. Born blind in Paris in 1870, he attended the Paris Conservatory where he learned composition from César Franck. Later, he became the organist at the Nôtre Dame Cathedral. Apart from the 6 organ symphonies, he also wrote a mass, a string quartet, and

Program Notes (continued)

various other chamber works. He perfected the concert style of writing for the organ, and his music reflects the immense and decorated architecture of Nôtre Dame, as well as the intensity of his lifestyle.

Charles Ives is without doubt one of the most remarkable American composers of the early part of this century. From his youth, his father, a bandleader, instructed the entire Ives family in the art of singing in close harmony, instilling in the young Charles a knowledge and comfort with polytonality and dissonance. The composition of **Psalm 90** spanned a period of over thirty years. The text of this particular psalm had moved him very deeply, and the final setting of the psalm is said to be one of the only works that he was entirely satisfied with. The scoring of the psalm is for SATB *divisi*, organ, three sets of bells and gong, which interplay with haunting and dramatic results. The opening presents a series of organ chords with various titles attached to them (to be spoken by members of the choir). These sonorities are developed throughout the work, both homophonically and polyphonically, alternating simple unison chant with a number of complex and climactic eight-part chords and whole-tone clusters above a pervasive C pedal point. The setting concludes quietly and simply, with the chorus's pleas for mercy and peace accompanied by the bells in various repeated patterns.

Lynn Anne Roberts

University of Alberta Madrigal Singers

Soprano
Tanya Binette
Melanie Cherniwchan
Danica Clark
Michelle Crouch
Lisa Fernandes
Rachel Grantham
Alicia Kerley
Jolaine Kerley
Casey Peden
Ardelle Ries
Maura Sharkey
Barbara Sadler Wells
Rachelle Ventura
Kathleen Warke
Karen Zwartjes

Alto
Josie Burgess
Tami Friesen
Leela Gilday
Amanda Gogowich
Wendy Grönnestad
Joy-Anne Murphy
Lynne Anne Roberts
Elizabeth Scholtz
Tamara Schwartzentruber
Adrienne Sitko
Robin Witt

Tenor
Jacob Cooper
John Giffen
Mark Healy
Tom Macleay
Gavin Meyers
Daniel Sheinin

Bass
Bruce Cable
Kevin Gagnon
Atley Jonas
William Kempster
Curtis Knecht
Troy Lamoureux
László Nemes
Brennan Szafron

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